

NRO 25X1

COVERT SATELLITE SYSTEM

NRO DECLASSIFICATION/RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS ON FILE

Included in the NRO program is a project for the development of a truly covert satellite reconnaissance system. The development of this capability was approved by the NSC at the end of June, but at BOB intercession the President concurred that activities should initially be limited to studies. Such studies have been under way for many months and hopefully will reach the point where decisions on systems' feasibility could be made during the winter. At this time it is not possible to say whether it will then be possible to select a specific system for development which would, as a consequence, involve fairly large sums of money in FY 1964, or whether further research will be required. Furthermore, the requirement for such a system will, of course, depend on the degree of success which we are achieving in establishing the legitimacy of satellite reconnaissance. I personally believe that this legitimacy is still sufficiently uncertain that considerable priority should be attached to development of a truly covert launch system. I am, therefore, personally more inclined to put greater funding in the FY 1964 budget than Dr. Charyk. The Bureau of the Budget for reasons which are not clear to me seems to be rather strongly opposed to such a development.

Signed Herbert Scoville, Jr.

HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.
Deputy Director
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